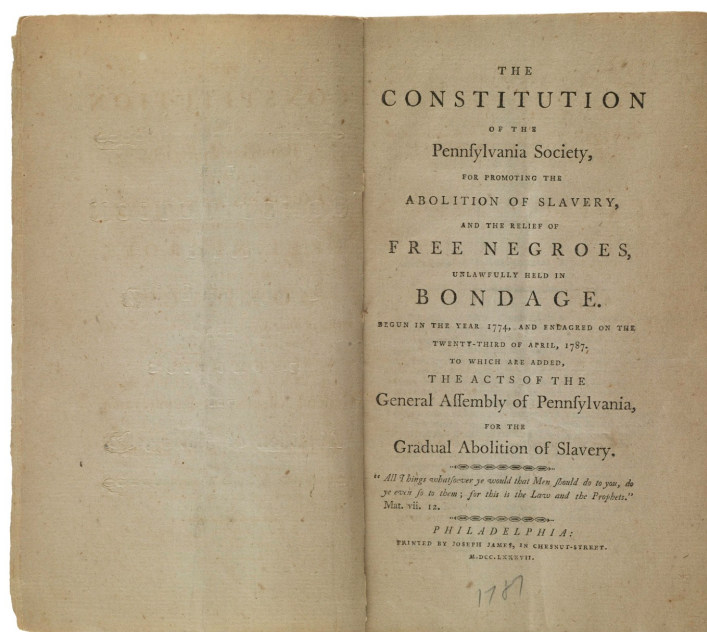


Slavery or Freedom?

Forced labor of Africans had long been an accepted part of European colonizing. The Revolutionary ideals of equality and rights threw such received practices into doubt, and some people on both sides of the Atlantic organized to combat slavery and the slave trade. The actions of enslaved Americans also had a deep impact. Many African Americans claimed liberty by enlisting in the British or Continental Armies during the war, running away, petitioning and negotiating for freedom, or rebelling. Their actions challenged the idea that enslavement was natural or acceptable to them. A growing community of free Africans demonstrated their capacities as citizens.

Organizing Against Slavery



Pamphlet, "The Constitution of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery," 1787

Quakers, evangelical Christians, and Enlightenment thinkers criticized the slave trade and slaveholding. Two dozen men founded an anti-slavery society in Philadelphia in 1775. The group grew and adopted this constitution in 1787. They worried that the U.S. Constitution's fugitive slave clause already endangered free people of color.

Hours & Admission

Open every day, except December 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admission is free and no tickets are required.

Location & Contact

1300 Constitution Ave NW,
Washington, DC 20560 <<https://www.google.com/maps/place/smithsonian+national+museum+of+american+history/@38.8912835,-77.0322449,17z>>

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